115 In my congregation at the station of Shiluvane was an old convert baptised, odd to relate, by the name of a professor of divinity of Lausanne, *Viguet*. He was a clever man, but not always a very good Christian, I must confess. He possessed a splendid memory. Having been headman in a village of Thonga refugees in the Spelonken, he gave me valuable information regarding the mysteries of family life as well as about the initiation ceremonies. His home was Tsungu on the Limpopo but he had moved to the Transvaal during the succession war of 1862. He was certainly a first-rate informant, possessing a clear head, always using the technical expressions and illustrating his points with great skill. He and Mankhelu have taught me most of what I know about the Northern clans. I learned however many other facts from *Mauewe*, the poet-laureate of the Nkuna court and from *Simeon Gona*, one of my pupils who belonged to an old and important family, and also from others.

115 In 1907 I came back to the coast to start in Rikatla (18 miles North
124 of Lourenço Marques) a Training Institution for our work in Portuguese Territory. There I again found my old friend Spoon, who had been baptised Elias and was one of the elders of the little Church; he had grown old, but was still of the same merry character and disposed to communicate anything he knew. Another man was his co-elder there, a Ronga of the Mazwaya family called *Mboza*. I found him to be a very intelligent man, quite an authority on the rites of the clan. He had been "possessed" and had gone through all the initiation ceremonies of the Ngoni possession, having become an exorciser himself. So he was able to give me new information on this mysterious subject. I undertook a systematic investigation with these two men in 1909, taking as a guide the set of questions prepared by Prof. J. Frazer for people collecting ethnographical material, and giving special attention to the question of the taboo. During this study, which took me many months, I was more than ever impressed with the immense complexity of the life of a South African tribe!

115 In quoting my sources of information I must also mention the
126 pupils of my school. Every Tuesday night we had a meeting in which one of them had to relate a story, to describe a custom, to tell a Native tale... His companions then added what they knew, and as some of them were grown up men, these debates were often very instructive.

I was able to collect in all more than one hundred tales; most of them have been published in my *Chants et Contes des Ba-Ronga* and

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

126 in the book on *Les Ba-Ronga*. I have still a good many in manuscript, some of which will be found in the second volume of the present work.

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Spoon-Eliza
an Church elder in 1907.

121 My aim in collecting all this material has been twofold ; scientific and practical.

First of all scientific. The life of a South African tribe is a collection of biological phenomena which must be described objectively and which are of great interest, representing, as they do, a certain stage of human development. These biological phenomena are sometimes at first of a repulsive character. The sexual life of the Bantus especially shocks our moral feelings. I did not think however that I could entirely leave out this subject in a scientific book, and the more I studied it, the more I saw that these strange rites have a much deeper meaning than at first appears, and that we could not pretend to know Natives if we remained ignorant of these facts. But while trying to give a full account, I am convinced, on the other hand, that, to be truly scientific, such a description must be limited to one well defined tribe. I go even further : all the data must be localised ; in the tribe itself there are different clans ; customs vary from one to another. It is of the greatest importance that all the facts be classed geographically. A similar work can be done later for other tribes, and it is only when a sufficient number of trustworthy monographs have been written that a comparative study on Bantu ethnography can be undertaken. The "Essential Kafir" of Dudley Kidd is very interesting and full of useful remarks, but the essential Kafir will not be known, till a scientific and thorough study of all the tribes has been completed. My aim has been to submit the Thonga tribe to such a study and I shall be most gratified if it leads other observers to undertake the same investigation with regard to other African tribes.